



## COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

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### MEDIA ADVISORY

#### **Free tax preparation available for those eligible for Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC)**

*Media event planned; interviews available with refund recipients and tax preparers*

**What:** The Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) is the largest poverty-fighting program in the country.

According to the Internal Revenue Service, the EITC could bring \$1 billion into the Virginia economy each year. Free tax preparation is available for low-to-moderate income working families and individuals; those who qualify for EITC are eligible to have their taxes prepared at no cost.

**Who:** The Virginia Department of Social Services  
The Virginia Board of Social Services  
The Virginia Community Action Partnership

**Why:**

- If every Virginian who qualified for EITC took advantage of the credit, the Commonwealth would see more than \$1 billion in federal EITC refund dollars.
- Up to 22 percent of qualifying Virginia households (between 91,200 and 114,000 households) do not take advantage of the credit, mainly because they are not aware of it.
- Federal funds from EITC can provide an important economic boost to Virginia.
- In tax year 2005, 478,365 Virginia households benefited from EITC; the average credit amount was \$1,834 per household.

#### **Newsworthy topics to be discussed during the event:**

- The Greater Richmond Earned Income Tax Credit Coalition (GREITCC) has established 12 free tax preparation sites in the Metro Richmond and Tri-Cities areas. A complete list is attached.
- EITC and free tax preparation help Virginia's working poor.
- EITC and free tax prep sites benefit local economies.
- Recipients commonly use their refunds for emergency expenses, medical and dental care, car repairs and other basic necessities.

**When:** **TUESDAY, FEB. 19, 2008**  
**1:30 p.m.**

**Where:** Richmond Community Action Program  
1103 Oliver Hill Way, Richmond, Virginia 23219

**Contact:** Carla Harris (804) 726-7107  
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**Editor's Note:** Interview and photo opportunities local individuals having their taxes prepared through the EITC program. Representatives from the Virginia Department of Social Services, The Virginia Community Action Partnership, tax preparers and individuals will be available to share their thoughts on how filing for the

EITC will have a positive impact. For information on EITC and free tax preparation sites, visit [www.dss.virginia.gov](http://www.dss.virginia.gov).